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It is no idle request, for if a bat "pitches" on to a person's face, it needs a knife to cut the creature off again. Variants are used in other countries. The bird called Peggy Whitethroat is entreated to remain, with —

Pretty Peggy Whitethroat, come stop and give us a note.

POPULAR FORMULAS IN MASSACHUSETTS. — The following mention is made of formulas of speech in Massachusetts, by a writer in the "Adams Freeman," January 12, 1895.

The people of Adams for two generations were really by themselves. The newspaper was a rare visitor, and when it came it was generally read by one to a company. Letter postage was too high to promote correspondence.

A visit to Troy, the market town, was a notable event of rare occurrence, but to Boston or New York there were tearful leave-takings as though it were forever.

The great world was a sealed book to a majority of the people. Each farm almost wholly supplied the family needs, while from necessity every member of the family who could do so took some part in working out the family problem.

The good sense of this people clung to manners of speech their parents brought to Adams, and which *their* ancestors brought from over the sea, — old world sayings with new world application; strong Saxon words and phrases.

Thus, in speaking of one in whom they lacked confidence — "I have a poor conceit, or no conceit, of him" (pronounced consait). To be low spirited was to have the "hypos."

Strength of character was "grit" or "gritty," and to be unstable was "flighty." One capable could "turn himself" or "turn his hand" or "had gumption." Of some girls it was said "they go through the wood, and at last take up with a crooked stick," and of a loving couple, "they live together like two birds in one neast" (nest). "Quit," or "you quit," was a common word with boys. "Pudding-head" was for dull persons. "Too much pudding will choke a dog" phrased a determination to resist importunity to eat more food.

"Puff" with its derivations was used in many ways. Idleness, shiftlessness, and strolling were sharply derided under the head of "poor critters," "spinners of street yearn," "pesky varmints," and other broad terms.

"Praise to the face is an open disgrace," was a common expression.

Children early learned to puncture shams and foolish talkers in rhyme. The following seemed to be a complete overthrow for big talk : —

Nigger in the wood-pile,  
Don't you hear him holler?  
Come down to my house to-night,  
I 'll give you half a dollar.

Admonition to piety and the penalty of disobedience : —

Grandfather long legs  
Would n't say his prayers ;  
Took him by the hind leg  
And threw him down stairs.

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## NOTES AND QUERIES.

**CUSTOM OF WEARING GOLD BEADS.** — In the older New England towns will still be found women who retain necklaces of gold beads, which have belonged to them from youth, and with which they are reluctant to part, sometimes declining considerable offers. In former time it was usual with thrifty damsels to procure such necklaces, purchasing them bead by bead, as savings enabled ; they were regarded as a form of investment, and a provision against marriage, being always convertible into coin. Perhaps the habit was a survival of the ancient use of gold chains as money, the links being easily separable, and coin being scarce. However, other motives seem to be connected with the practice. A writer on the folk-lore of Adams, Mass., in a paper cited above, says : "Gold beads were a protection against the 'King's Evil' (scrofula), and nearly every fair maiden and matron wore ample strings of beautiful large beads." This feeling is not wholly extinct ; a friend endeavoring to purchase such a necklace, in Laconia, N. H., of an elderly woman, was refused on the ground that it secured her against sickness.

*W. W. Newell.*

**CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS OF THE RIO GRANDE.** — The article having this title, by Capt. J. G. Bourke, U. S. A., printed in No. xxv. pp. 119-146, has elicited correspondence, from which extracts are here presented.

R. Peirce, of Laredo, Texas, writes in reference to Cat, that the "pelon" dog, of the Rio Grande, has been used by the Mexican people of that valley to effect cures for rheumatism, in much the same way that Captain Bourke describes the cat as doing in the cure of consumption (p. 123).

With reference to the credulity of Mexicans, an English correspondent gives an account of the state of mind of friends of his own, country people of excellent social position, and fairly educated on general subjects, who made remarks which he treated as simply intended for amusement, until, to his surprise, he found that these ladies verily believed in witches and witchcraft. He observes that, if this be the case in the England of 1894, we must not be too hard on Maria Antonia. The same writer remarks that the belief in the virtues of the urine of a babe as a cosmetic (p. 124) existed, in England, to his own knowledge, as late as 1851, and not among persons of the lower orders only. He observes that against cross-eyes men (p. 125), spitting, or making the sign of the cross is in England thought to be a protection, but that neither action should be obtrusive, as the spitter is thought to dislike them.